

DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

Distribution: X,Z, and C-3

POLICY GUIDE 2000.09

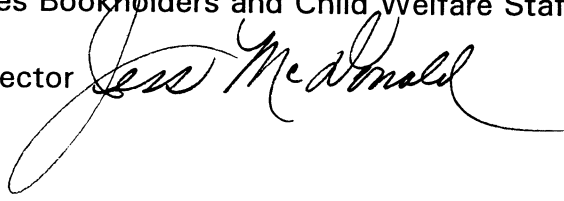
CASEWORKER CONTACTS INVOLVING PARAMOUR CASES

RELEASE DATE: August 4, 2000

TO: Rules and Procedures Bookholders and Child Welfare Staff

FROM: Jess McDonald, Director

EFFECTIVE: August 15, 2000



I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Policy Guide is to issue new frequency of contact requirements when a case involves a paramour of the custodial parent.

II. PRIMARY USERS

The primary users of this Policy Guide are protective service and child welfare workers of the Department and purchase of service agencies.

III. Definition of Paramour

For operational purposes, "paramour" means a significant other (e.g.,

- boyfriend,
- girlfriend,
- lover,
- partner,
- friend, or
- putative father)

who is involved in an intimate/romantic relationship with one of the custodial parents of the children who come to the official attention of the Department through a child abuse or neglect investigation and/or open case; does not have a legally recognized and/or *significant, continuous and stable* relationship with *all* of the children; and may or may not live in the same household of the custodial parent of the involved children.

Although stepparents (parental rights established via marriage) are not included in this definition, the following procedures should also be applied to any stepparent named as a perpetrator of physical abuse to a stepchild if the stepparent has not had a significant, continuous and stable relationship with the custodial parent and involved stepchildren.



IV. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Procedures 300, Reports of Child Abuse and Neglect, and Procedures 302, Subpart B, Reports of Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect or Incidents Involving Sexually Aggressive Wards, have been revised to include procedures for investigators (P300) and child welfare staff (P302, Subpart B) to follow when cases indicate that a paramour is involved with the custodial parent. The procedures require more frequent contacts with the family than are currently specified in Rule 315, Section 315.110, Worker Interventions and Contacts. This Policy Guide is intended to remind workers of those frequencies whenever they refer to Rule 315 for guidance on how often they are to conduct in-person contacts with children and families. Rule 315 is currently being amended to incorporate the recommendations of the Best Practice Work Group on Permanency. The contact frequency requirements for cases involving paramours will be included with those amendments.

V. FREQUENCY OF CONTACTS

During the Investigation

Investigative staff shall conduct **weekly** monitoring visits with the involved children during the course of all pending formal investigations, which have not yet been referred to follow-up staff, when the following conditions exist:

- a child victim is under ten years of age; or
- a child victim is vulnerable to physical abuse and injury due to a handicapping condition; or
- a child victim has been seriously injured.

However, the assigned Department or purchase of service agency caseworker shall conduct the weekly monitoring visit for families with open service cases unless other arrangements are made with the investigator. Child welfare staff shall document monitoring visits on the CFS 492.

Intact Family and Reunification Cases

During the first three months of a new intact family case the child victims must be observed weekly for possible injuries and, if verbal, interviewed. Children are not to be interviewed with either the paramour or custodial parent present. This requirement also applies to open reunification cases unless the child victims are removed from the home. Department and purchase of service agency casework supervisors must approve any decrease in the number of monitoring visits and document his or her decision in the case file.

VI. Filing Instructions

File this Policy Guide between pages Rules 315 – (14) and (15).